

**NOVEMBER 2003 AGENDA**

<b>SUBJECT</b> California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE): Update on CAHSEE activities, including, but not limited to, the Year 4 Independent Evaluation Report and the 2002-2003 test results	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Action</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Public Hearing</b>

**Recommendation:**

Take action as deemed necessary and appropriate.

**Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action**

None.

**Summary of Key Issue(s)**

This SBE item covers the following topics:

- (1) The independent evaluator, Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), submits an annual report on CAHSEE activities each year. In May, HumRRO presented a separate report required by Assembly Bill 1609. This report, due at the end of September, is the HumRRO Year 4 Report for the CAHSEE activities during the 2002-03 school year.
- (2) CDE posts CAHSEE test results annually on the CDE Web site in October. A summary of the results is presented here.

**CAHSEE: Year 4 Evaluation Report**

The CAHSEE independent evaluator, HumRRO, submitted its Year 4 Evaluation Report to the California Department of Education (CDE) at the end of September. The Report is being sent to SBE members and has been posted on the Internet at [www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee](http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee). The Year 4 report contains findings and recommendations, an analysis of the results from 2002-2003 test administrations, and results from student, teacher, and administrator surveys. The Executive Summary is attached.

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**Summary of Key Issue(s)****CAHSEE 2002-2003 Results**

The results of the six administrations from 2002-2003 is posted on the Internet at [www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee](http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee). The results are reported by school, district, county, and state for each administration, as well as one combined report for all administrations.

Grade 11 and adult students were able to take the test multiple times; Grade 10 students were to test only once during this year census administrations. The reports present information for all students by number of students tested; number and percent of students who passed and did not pass; and present information for all students by gender, ethnicity, language fluency, economic status, and special education program participation. Of the number of grade 10 students tested, 78 percent passed English-language arts and 59 percent passed mathematics. An additional 35 percent of grade 11 repeat test takers passed English-language arts and an additional 22 percent of repeat test takers passed mathematics. Attached are the Demographic Summary Reports for All Students tested for English-Language Arts and Mathematics for grades 10 and 11.

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**Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)**

None.

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**Attachment(s)**

Attachment 1: [HumRRO Year 4 Evaluation Executive Summary \(Pages 4\)](#)

Attachment 2: [Demographic Summary for All Students Tested–State Report-Grade 10- English-Language Arts and Mathematics \(Combined 2003\); Demographic Summary for All Students Tested–State Report-Grade 11- English-Language Arts and Mathematics; \(Combined 2003\) \(Pages 4\)](#)

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**Independent Evaluation of the California High School Exit Examination  
(CAHSEE): Year 4 Evaluation Report  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY <sup>1</sup>**

California has just concluded the third year of administering its High School Exit Examination. The requirement that students pass a graduation exam in mathematics and English-language arts (ELA) beginning with the Class of 2004 was established by Senate Bill (SB)-2X passed in 1999 and written into the California Education Code as Chapter 8, Section 60850. This section of the code was further modified through the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 1609 in 2002. The revised legislation that gave the State Board of Education (the Board) authority to postpone the CAHSEE requirement was based in part on a mandated study of the extent to which both test development and standards-based instruction met the criteria for this type of examination. The study report was issued on May 1, 2003 (Wise et al., May 2003). In July of this year, after the completion of the 2002–03 CAHSEE testing, the Board voted to defer the CAHSEE requirement until 2006.

The legislation that authorized the graduation exam also specified an independent evaluation of the CAHSEE. The California Department of Education (CDE) awarded a contract for this evaluation to the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO). HumRRO's efforts focus on analyses of data from tryouts of test questions and from the annual administrations of the CAHSEE, and report on trends in pupil performance and retention, graduation, dropout, and college attendance rates. The legislation also specified that evaluation reporting will include recommendations for improving the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the examination. This document meets the contract requirement for a report of activities and findings during the fourth year of the evaluation. Our report examines results beyond those reported in the legislatively mandated January 2002 report covering the 2001 CAHSEE administration (Wise, Sipes, Harris, George, Ford, & Sun, 2002) and in the subsequent report (Wise et al., June 2002).

**Test Development, Administration and Scoring**

When the Legislature passed AB 1609 in 2002, it mandated specific changes to the CAHSEE, including a special study of the extent to which the development of the CAHSEE and standards-based instruction met the requirements for a high school graduation test. Evaluation activities were expanded to meet the requirements for this study. A detailed description of the study, along with findings and recommendations, were included in a report to the Board issued May 1 and are not repeated in the present report (Wise et al., May 2003, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee/eval/AB1609/index.html>).

Year 4 evaluation activities summarized in the current report include:

*Review of Test Developer Plans and Reports.* HumRRO continued to monitor test development activities and reports. These included changes to test administration procedures, equating alternate forms, and changes to reporting procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> Wise, L.L., Harris, C.D, Brown, D. G., Becker, D.E., Sun, S., Coumbe, K.L. (2003). *California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE): Year 4 Evaluation Report* (FR-03-64R). Alexandria, VA: Human Resources Research Organization.

Analysis of Operational CAHSEE Data. HumRRO analyzed results from the six operational administrations of CAHSEE from July 2002 through May 2003. These included continued administration to 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2004 who had not yet passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE and a census administration to 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2005. Results from the analyses of student test results are described in Chapter 2 of this report. Additional analyses of student responses to survey questions are described in Chapter 3.

Longitudinal Surveys of District and School Sample Personnel. The annual survey of a longitudinal representative sample of 24 districts and approximately 90 of their high schools continued for the fourth consecutive year; one district's refusal required replacement of that district, including three schools. The surveys, which were administered to principals and English-language arts and mathematics teachers, provided a continuing look at schools' perspectives of the impact of the CAHSEE on their programs. In addition, testing coordinators were surveyed for the second year to identify problems with the administration of the CAHSEE. Results from these analyses are described in Chapter 4 of this report.

### **Findings and Recommendations**

The main findings and recommendations stemming from Year 4 evaluation activities are presented in Chapter 5. In brief, the general findings are as follows:

**General Finding 1. While precise comparisons are not possible, by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade passing rates for students in the Class of 2005 were slightly lower than passing rates for students in the Class of 2004.**

**General Finding 2: Available evidence indicates that the CAHSEE has not led to any increase in dropout rates. In fact enrollment declines from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade for the Class of 2004 were significantly lower than declines for prior high school classes.**

**General Finding 3: More students in the Class of 2005 believed that the CAHSEE was important to them compared to Class of 2004 students when they were in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Slightly more said they did as well as they could on the exam. Expectations for graduation and post-high school plans were largely unchanged for the Class of 2005 in comparison to the Class of 2004.**

**General Finding 4: Schools are continuing efforts to ensure that the California Content Standards are covered in instruction and to provide support for students who need additional help in mastering these standards. Many programs that were in the planning stages or only partially implemented a year ago have now been fully implemented.**

**General Finding 5: Teacher and principal expectations for the impact of CAHSEE on students are largely unchanged from prior years.**

**General Finding 6: Professional development in the teaching of the content standards has not yet been extensive.**

**General Finding 7: There were no significant problems with local understanding of test administration procedures, but some issues remain with the provision of student data and the assignment of testing accommodations.**

Subsequent to the 2003 administrations, the Board deferred implementation of the CAHSEE requirement to the Class of 2006. Based on information available to date (as summarized in our general findings), we offer four recommendations for future administration of the CAHSEE.

**Recommendation 1: Restarting the exam with the Class of 2006 provides some opportunities for improvement; however, careful consideration should be given to any changes that are implemented.**

The AB 1609 study report (Wise et al., May 2003) included several recommendations for changes that could ensure better alignment of what is tested with what is taught, making it easier for all students to demonstrate adequate mastery of the intended content. At its July 2003 meeting, the Board approved plans to shorten the ELA testing to a single day and to reduce cognitive demands for mathematics questions while still assessing the same standards. Changes to the score scale and possibly even the reexamination of test content specifications are also being considered.

Given the opportunity to restart the CAHSEE for the Class of 2006 next year, consideration of such changes is entirely appropriate. An exact equating of scores from new administrations to scores from prior administrations is not necessary, since the prior administrations no longer “count.” (All students tested to date are no longer required to pass the CAHSEE.) Nonetheless, the time to implement changes is very short. Forms for the 2004 administrations must be printed by about December of this year, so there is no time to develop and field test new questions. In addition, current procedures have worked very well. A careful review will be needed to ensure that proposed alternatives will work equally well.

We are particularly concerned that there be adequate technical review of plans to reduce the testing time for ELA to a single day. Members of the original HSEE Standards Panel that recommended the content to be covered by the test felt strongly about the need for students to demonstrate their ability to write coherently. To what extent will eliminating one of the two essay questions increase errors in classifying students as passing or not passing? Will the relative weight assigned to writing versus reading and to the writing standards covered by the essays in particular be changed? There is, unfortunately, not time for the Board to seek the advice of another panel of content experts on these matters, but a careful technical review is both feasible and important.

**Recommendation 2: The Department of Education and the State Board of Education should continue to monitor and encourage efforts by districts and schools to implement effective standards-based instruction.**

Results from the AB 1609 study (Wise et al., May 2003) indicated that standards-based instruction was widely available in both middle and high schools. High school instruction includes significant new efforts to provide second-chance opportunities for students who did not fully master required skills during initial instruction. The study also found,

however, that current instruction was not effective in that many students taking the standards-based courses offered still could not pass the CAHSEE. There were indications that instruction was likely to improve for students in high school classes beyond 2004 and 2005. Ensuring that effective instruction is available to all students remains critical to the successful implementation of the CAHSEE requirements. CDE must monitor further improvements to standards-based instruction and both CDE and the Board should encourage further efforts in this regard. Providing information on exemplary programs to other districts is one example of how such efforts might be encouraged.

**Recommendation 3: Professional development for teachers is a significant opportunity for improvement.**

Results from the AB 1609 study indicated that many students were taking initial and remedial courses covering the California Content Standards included on the CAHSEE, but not benefiting fully from these courses. One reason was that the students did not have important prerequisite knowledge or skills. Additional professional development for teachers could help them be more effective in the courses they are already teaching and also could help them identify students needing additional help with prerequisite skills. One particular target of opportunity identified in the AB 1609 study was that a significant number of teachers involved in remedial mathematics had considerable experience with special education students, but less training in mathematics itself.

**Recommendation 4: Further consideration of the CAHSEE requirements for special education students is needed, in light of the low passing rates for this group. Apparent disparities between racial and ethnic groups within the special education population require further investigation.**

In our evaluation activities, we have introduced separate consideration of special education students who are able to participate in regular classes and those who cannot. Treating all special education students as a single group may mask solutions that could help those able to master critical content standards, while setting more realistic expectations for students who cannot reasonably be expected to master these standards.

The very low passing rate, particularly in mathematics, for special education students who are African American or Hispanic deserves further investigation. Are these students somehow more severely handicapped? Are they concentrated in less effective schools? How can we best understand and remediate these discrepancies?

Overall, the CAHSEE requirement continues to have a significant impact on instruction and student achievement. Much work remains to be done in helping all students meet the standards for high school graduation that have been established. CDE and the Board face continuing challenges in implementing the CAHSEE requirement.

California High School Exit Examination

**Demographic Summary for All Students Tested - State Report- Grade 10 English-Language Arts  
Combined 2003**

File Date: 9/24/2003

Note: correction process pending

	Number Tested	Number Passed	Percent Passed	Number Not Passed	Percent Not Passed
<b>Grade</b>					
Tenth	404,371	315,799	78%	88,572	22%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	205,760	151,911	74%	53,849	26%
Female	197,961	163,535	83%	34,426	17%
Unknown	650	353	54%	297	46%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
American Indian or Alaska Native	3,473	2,721	78%	752	22%
Asian	38,139	32,556	85%	5,583	15%
Pacific Islander	2,688	2,072	77%	616	23%
Filipino	12,211	10,903	89%	1,308	11%
Hispanic or Latino	158,853	104,432	66%	54,421	34%
African American (not of Hispanic origin)	31,991	21,934	69%	10,057	31%
White (not of Hispanic origin)	151,889	137,781	91%	14,108	9%
Unknown	5,127	3,400	66%	1,727	34%
<b>Language Fluency</b>					
English Only Students	255,112	216,501	85%	38,611	15%
Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP)	36,353	31,642	87%	4,711	13%
Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)	42,781	37,529	88%	5,252	12%
English Learner Students	68,016	28,828	42%	39,188	58%
Unknown	2,109	1,298	62%	811	38%
<b>Economic Status</b>					
Non-Economically Disadvantaged Students	267,061	228,103	85%	38,958	15%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	132,395	84,466	64%	47,929	36%
Unknown	4,915	3,230	66%	1,685	34%
<b>Special Education Program Participation</b>					
Students Receiving Services	33,697	11,709	35%	21,988	65%
Students Not Receiving Services	370,674	304,090	82%	66,584	18%

-- To protect privacy, no results for any group with 10 or fewer students will be released.

California High School Exit Examination

**Demographic Summary for All Students Tested - State Report- Grade 10 Mathematics  
Combined 2003**

File Date: 9/24/2003

Note: correction process pending

	Number Tested	Number Passed	Percent Passed	Number Not Passed	Percent Not Passed
<b>Grade</b>					
Tenth	417,292	244,692	59%	172,600	41%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	212,534	124,663	59%	87,871	41%
Female	204,030	119,779	59%	84,251	41%
Unknown	728	250	34%	478	66%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
American Indian or Alaska Native	3,634	1,958	54%	1,676	46%
Asian	38,488	31,787	83%	6,701	17%
Pacific Islander	2,784	1,544	55%	1,240	45%
Filipino	12,436	9,121	73%	3,315	27%
Hispanic or Latino	165,676	68,336	41%	97,340	59%
African American (not of Hispanic origin)	33,610	12,179	36%	21,431	64%
White (not of Hispanic origin)	155,203	117,332	76%	37,871	24%
Unknown	5,461	3,005	55%	2,456	45%
<b>Language Fluency</b>					
English Only Students	262,753	169,675	65%	93,078	35%
Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP)	37,350	24,992	67%	12,358	33%
Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)	44,389	28,260	64%	16,129	36%
English Learner Students	70,506	20,858	30%	49,648	70%
Unknown	2,294	907	40%	1,387	60%
<b>Economic Status</b>					
Non-Economically Disadvantaged Students	274,093	184,351	67%	89,742	33%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	137,870	58,066	42%	79,804	58%
Unknown	5,329	2,275	43%	3,054	57%
<b>Special Education Program Participation</b>					
Students Receiving Services	35,268	5,745	16%	29,523	84%
Students Not Receiving Services	382,024	238,947	63%	143,077	37%

-- To protect privacy, no results for any group with 10 or fewer students will be released.



California High School Exit Examination

**Demographic Summary for All Students Tested - State Report- Grade 11\* English-Language Arts  
Combined 2003**

File Date: 9/24/2003

Note: correction process pending

	Number Tested*	Number Passed	Percent Passed	Number Not Passed	Percent Not Passed
<b>Grade</b>					
Eleventh	170,421	60,183	35%	110,238	65%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	99,815	32,997	33%	66,818	67%
Female	70,041	27,009	39%	43,032	61%
Unknown	565	177	31%	388	69%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,424	582	41%	842	59%
Asian	12,213	4,057	33%	8,156	67%
Pacific Islander	1,309	533	41%	776	59%
Filipino	3,083	1,449	47%	1,634	53%
Hispanic or Latino	96,612	28,926	30%	67,686	70%
African American (not of Hispanic origin)	19,074	6,541	34%	12,533	66%
White (not of Hispanic origin)	31,206	15,985	51%	15,221	49%
Unknown	5,500	2,110	38%	3,390	62%
<b>Language Fluency</b>					
English Only Students	80,721	35,191	44%	45,530	56%
Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP)	9,733	4,399	45%	5,334	55%
Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)	10,305	4,810	47%	5,495	53%
English Learner Students	67,446	14,857	22%	52,589	78%
Unknown	2,216	926	42%	1,290	58%
<b>Economic Status</b>					
Non-Economically Disadvantaged Students	85,746	35,455	41%	50,291	59%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	78,054	22,057	28%	55,997	72%
Unknown	6,621	2,671	40%	3,950	60%
<b>Special Education Program Participation</b>					
Students Receiving Services	36,938	6,152	17%	30,786	83%
Students Not Receiving Services	133,483	54,031	40%	79,452	60%

-- To protect privacy, no results for any group with 10 or fewer students will be released.

\*Note: This number represents only the Grade 11 students who had not yet passed this part of the CAHSEE.  
Grade 11 students had up to three opportunities to take the CAHSEE in 2002-03.

California High School Exit Examination

**Demographic Summary for All Students Tested-State Report- Grade 11\* Mathematics**

Combined 2003

File Date: 9/24/2003

Note: correction process pending

	Number Tested*	Number Passed	Percent Passed	Number Not Passed	Percent Not Passed
<b>Grade</b>					
Eleventh	318,696	68,892	22%	249,804	78%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	155,759	33,194	21%	122,565	79%
Female	161,761	35,440	22%	126,321	78%
Unknown	1,176	258	22%	918	78%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
American Indian or Alaska Native	2,777	588	21%	2,189	79%
Asian	14,438	4,896	34%	9,542	66%
Pacific Islander	2,501	600	24%	1,901	76%
Filipino	6,952	2,191	32%	4,761	68%
Hispanic or Latino	174,778	31,486	18%	143,292	82%
African American (not of Hispanic origin)	37,360	5,686	15%	31,674	85%
White (not of Hispanic origin)	70,233	21,448	31%	48,785	69%
Unknown	9,657	1,997	21%	7,660	79%
<b>Language Fluency</b>					
English Only Students	172,613	40,466	23%	132,147	77%
Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP)	23,520	5,847	25%	17,673	75%
Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)	30,249	7,888	26%	22,361	74%
English Learner Students	88,696	13,809	16%	74,887	84%
Unknown	3,618	882	24%	2,736	76%
<b>Economic Status</b>					
Non-Economically Disadvantaged Students	176,292	42,887	24%	133,405	76%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	130,740	23,278	18%	107,462	82%
Unknown	11,664	2,727	23%	8,937	77%
<b>Special Education Program Participation</b>					
Students Receiving Services	50,663	3,520	7%	47,143	93%
Students Not Receiving Services	268,033	65,372	24%	202,661	76%

-- To protect privacy, no results for any group with 10 or fewer students will be released.

\*Note: This number represents only the Grade 11 Students who had not passed this part of the CAHSEE.  
Grade 11 students had up to three opportunities to take the CAHSEE in 2002-03.